

# American Cancer Society Relay For Life



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## ***Team Captain Handbook***



# American Cancer Society Relay For Life

## Team Captain Handbook



Welcome!

Thank you for volunteering to be a Team Captain for the American Cancer Society's signature activity, Relay For Life. Relay offers everyone in a community an opportunity to participate in the fight against cancer. Teams of people camp out at a local high school, park, or fairground and take turns walking or running around a track or path. Because cancer itself never sleeps, each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event. Relay is an overnight event, up to 24 hours in length. The celebration of survivorships brings communities together to learn about and raise money for the fight against cancer.

As a Team Captain, you are responsible for recruiting walkers and runners and making the connection between them and your local American Cancer Society office. You are the heart and soul of Relay For Life. We've developed this Team Captain handbook to help guide you through planning and managing this incredible event.

This handbook will help you speak knowledgeably about the American Cancer Society, answer questions, and encourage others to become involved. More importantly, you'll be ready to show your passion for making an impact against cancer.

Thank you for your dedication.

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# What is Relay?

Relay For Life is a fun, team-based overnight event. Eight or more friends, family members, or coworkers can form a Relay team. Each team submits a registration or commitment fee and each member raises a minimum of \$100 to support American Cancer Society research, education, advocacy, and patient service programs.

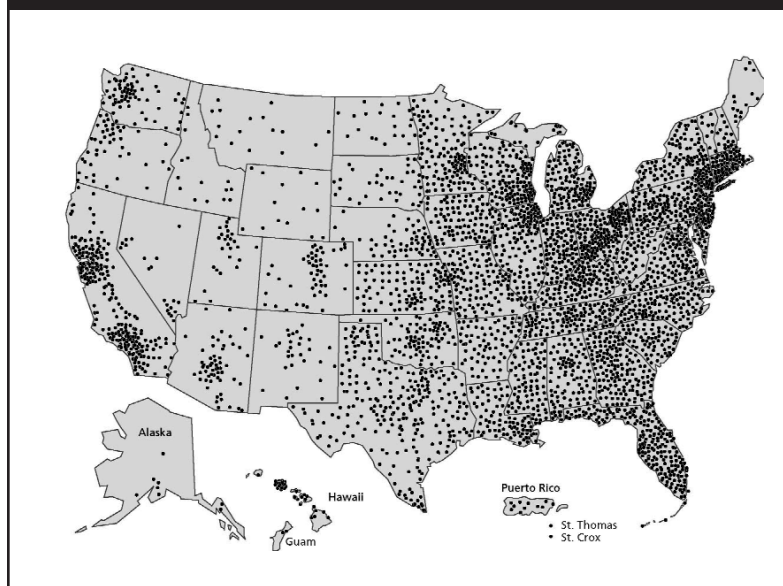
Relay For Life is the American Cancer Society's signature activity. That means that during a Relay event you can get a sense of the wide variety of programs that the American Cancer Society offers.

- Learn more about cancer.
- Receive tips for cancer prevention and staying healthy.
- Link up with others who are advocating for legislation to benefit patients, families, and public health.
- Find out about programs and services in your area that are especially geared for cancer patients and their families.



As each Relay begins, teams pitch tents (and often decorate their campsite) and set out the food, games, and sleeping bags that will keep them going throughout the event. Then in a moving tribute to survivorship, cancer survivors from the community kick-off the Relay by walking a victory lap around the track known as the Survivors' Lap. A luminaria ceremony to honor those affected by cancer is held at dusk. Lit candles are placed in bags bearing the names of both survivors and those lost to the disease.

## 2005 Relay Communities Nationwide



Throughout the evening and into the next day, everyone enjoys entertainment, fun, and camaraderie. Long before walkers have completed their last lap, new friends have been made, old friends have been hugged, and all hearts have been touched by the magic event that is the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life.

Each community's Relay For Life is special, but its greater power lies in the synergy created from all the Relays taking place nationwide. In 2006, more than 4,750 communities will hold an American Cancer Society Relay For Life.



# What Do Your Relay Dollars Support?

## Cancer Research

Since 1946, the Society has invested approximately \$3 billion in cancer research and has played a role in almost every scientific milestone in cancer research including the bone marrow transplant, the Pap test, and drug therapies like Gleevec and Tamoxifen.<sup>1</sup>

## Cancer Education

By dialing 1.800.ACS.2345 or visiting [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org), you can receive answers to your questions about cancer and referrals to local resources, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Through **Tell A Friend**®, volunteers reach out to the women in their lives to spread the lifesaving message of receiving regular mammograms.

**I Can Cope**® is a free educational program providing information about cancer diagnosis and treatment to help participants cope with physical and emotional challenges.

## Cancer Advocacy

The American Cancer Society works to make cancer a top priority for lawmakers at the federal, state, and local levels. Smoke-free communities, insurance coverage, protecting cancer survivors from discrimination, and improved access to health care are some of our most important concerns.



## Services for Cancer Patients and Their Families

**Reach to Recovery**® matches women who have survived breast cancer with those who have been recently diagnosed to offer information and support.

**Look Good...Feel Better**® workshops offer tips to appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment.

**Road to Recovery**SM provides transportation to and from outpatient cancer treatment appointments.

**Man to Man**® provides information and support for men affected by prostate cancer.

**Cancer Survivors Network**SM was created by and for cancer survivors and their families to help others who have been touched by cancer. Survivors can share experiences and offer support through Internet bulletin boards, Web casts, and by reading personal stories. Taped messages and personal stories are also available over the phone by calling toll free 1.877.333.HOPE.

**Hope Lodge**® Facilities provide temporary homes for cancer patients traveling far from home for treatment.

Relay For Life contributors and volunteers like you fuel these programs and services. By 2015, the American Cancer Society aims to prevent almost five million additional deaths from cancer, avoid six million new cancer diagnoses, and measurably improve the quality of life for those with the disease.<sup>2</sup> Your support is bringing us closer to realizing these challenging goals.

To access these services and more, call 1.800.ACS.2345 or log onto [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

1. Society Fact Sheet

– [http://www.cancer.org/docroot/AA/content/AA\\_1\\_2\\_2003\\_Fact\\_Sheet.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/AA/content/AA_1_2_2003_Fact_Sheet.asp)

2. [http://www.cancer.org/docroot/COM/content/div\\_PA/COM\\_4\\_2X\\_Volunteer\\_11087.asp?sitearea=COM](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/COM/content/div_PA/COM_4_2X_Volunteer_11087.asp?sitearea=COM)

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# So, What Do I Do Now That I'm a Team Captain?

Fighting cancer is a team effort. The strength of people coming together for a common cause is greater than the strength of one. Here's what you can do to build a successful team to fight cancer.



## Form Your Team

It's easier than you think to form a team. Here are some suggestions:

- Learn about Relay For Life and the American Cancer Society. People will be much more willing to listen when they see your passion and commitment to the cause.
- Make a presentation. Invite at least eight people – friends, family, coworkers – whoever you want! Use flyers to help get the word out. Serve refreshments and include a motivational speaker or the Relay video.
- Fill out and return your team roster and registration forms.
- Get your workplace involved. Invite management to form or sponsor a team or allow employees to “dress down” for a donation to the company team.
- Ask people you know and people you don't know. You'll get a greater response by asking 20 people than by posting 100 flyers.
- Create a team theme. It can be workplace related, like “Banking on a Cure,” or cancer-related, such as “Cancer Crusaders,” or humorous, like “Relay Lifesavers” or “The Polka Dot Team.” The creative possibilities are endless.

## Coordinate Your Team

Attention to a few nitty-gritty details will help you accomplish Relay goals:

- Set income goals for both individuals and your team.
- Encourage your team members to collect contributions for luminarias. Include luminaria sponsor forms with each contribution, so the candles can be properly dedicated.
- Schedule your team members to walk at different times during the event, so that at least one person is on the track at all times during the entire Relay.
- Make sure the team commitment fee is paid. (Please consult your Relay's chairperson or staff contact, as this varies by event.)
- Try to collect all team member envelopes a few days before the Relay so contributions can be counted. Each team member's envelope should contain at least \$100 in contributions, and should include the member's name, team name, and signature.
- Attend all Team Captain meetings and bank night, when pledges are turned in.
- Ask team members to volunteer for jobs during the Relay: cooking, setting up campsites, taking pictures, and cleaning up at the end of the event.



## Motivate Your Team

Do you want to have fun while volunteering to eliminate cancer? Your team will, too, especially if they are kept informed and motivated. Some of the most successful Relay teams have used one or more of the following ideas:

- Hold regular team meetings to build spirit and keep everyone excited and informed. Invite a Relay committee person or cancer survivor to speak, or show the Relay video at a meeting.
- Dedicate your team to someone – a cancer survivor or someone who has passed away from cancer. Tell that person's story and yours.
- Share Relay news and updates with every team member.
- Encourage team fundraising events (see a list of ideas on pages 6 and 7).



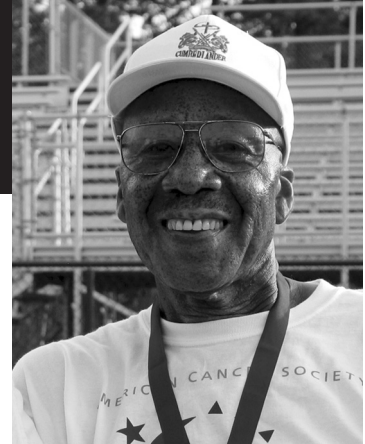
## Have Fun, and Be Sure to Thank Your Team Members!

Thank your team members for their time and commitment to participate, and make sure everyone knows where to meet you at the event. Give each team member a warm welcome when he or she arrives.

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# It's Easier Than You Think to Raise Money to Fight Cancer!

Everyone knows someone who has heard the words, “you have cancer.” That’s why so many people are willing to donate money to fight this disease. Know your stuff. Arm yourself with a few facts about Relay and the American Cancer Society. Then, ask! You’ll be surprised how many people are just waiting for an opportunity to make a difference.



## Fundraising Tips for Individuals

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You can ask in person or via a letter, email, or voice mail.

**Make your own contribution** and let others know that you are donating not only your money, but also your time.

**Aim high.** Ask for \$100 and settle for \$50. Gear the amount you’re requesting to your audience.

**Send letters early** and ask that they be returned by a due date. It’s harder for people to ignore when there is a due date other than the event date! A stamped return envelope also helps.

**Ask at your regular meetings.** If you belong to a service club or religious or social group, request time to ask for support.

**Ask everyone you meet.** Even if you have sent out letters, be sure to carry a collection envelope with you so that when you talk to people about the Relay, you can ask them to contribute right then.

**Dedicate** your personal efforts to someone who has been touched by cancer. Tell that person’s story and yours.

## Who Can Sponsor Me?

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Your best lunch date

Friends from your old job

Friends from your present job

Friends from school or college

Members of your sports team

Members of your hobby group

Members of your church or synagogue

Friends from your old neighborhood

Your landlord

Your car salesperson

Your car repair person

People you know through your spouse

People from your lodge or club

People who sell you groceries

People who sell you clothing

Your plumber

Your painter/decorator

Your travel agent

Your next-door neighbor

Your wedding attendants

Your veterinarian

Your children’s music teacher

Your physician(s)

Your lawyer

Your son’s or daughter’s scout leader

Your dry cleaner

Your florist

Your letter carrier

Your babysitter

Your children’s school principal

Fellow committee members

Your insurance agent

Your relatives

Your CPA

People you know through your children



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# Fundraising Tips for Teams

Whatever your fundraising efforts, remember to promote them as a benefit for the American Cancer Society. Use these ideas from around the country as a starting point for your own creativity.

**Auction** (silent or live): Hold the event at your business, in your neighborhood, or at a church/synagogue. Ask for contributions of unique items such as homemade toys or art, a hand-knitted sweater, a time-share, breakfast or dinner at someone's home, or a ride on someone's sailboat. Display the items (or their descriptions) prior to the event. Hold the auction over lunch or at a convenient time.

**Bake Sale:** Hold a Friday bake sale at work so employees will have treats for the weekend. Ask for baked goods to be wrapped attractively so they could be given as gifts. Encourage breakfast items, such as rolls and breads, as well as sweets like cakes and cookies.

**Business Challenges:** Coworkers can earn money by raising a minimum goal for fun prizes:

- A member of management mows your lawn, rakes your leaves, or shovels your snow
- Free lunch with the boss
- Parking place(s)
- A day off

**Car Wash:** Get your team together for a local town car wash. This works great for high school teams.

**Casual for Cancer:** Ask your company CEO or president to let the staff dress casually for a contribution of \$5 or more. You can do this once or on an ongoing basis.

**Matching Gifts:** If your company has a matching gifts program, it is an effective way to multiply your fundraising efforts. Be sure to check with the human resources department to obtain matching gift forms.

**Quilt-making:** Do you have a team that makes quilts? Dedicate quilt squares in honor or in memory of people and ask for a donation. Set donation levels for different sizes: a four-inch square for \$5, an eight-inch square for \$15, and a twelve-inch square for \$25. Display the quilt at a public location, such as the Chamber of Commerce.



**Sports Tournaments:** Set up challenge matches between individuals or departments for basketball, softball, football, or other sport. Ask for a contribution as an admission fee. Offer refreshments at the event for a donation.

**Potluck Party:** Have each team member invite at least 10 couples, including family, friends, and neighbors, to a potluck dinner. Have team members provide dishes for the event, and ask each couple for a donation of \$20.



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# Voice Mail and Email Messages

Use voice mail and email to help form a team, keep your team informed, ask for donations, raise awareness company-wide, and to remind everyone about important Relay For Life deadlines! These are only a few suggestions. If your team or company is totally “wired,” use your imagination to expand on them.



## **Prior to Forming a Team**

### ***Voice Mail***

Hi, this is (your name). I enjoy making a difference in our community, and I know you do, too. That's why I'm pleased to be supporting the Relay For Life, the American Cancer Society's signature event to fight cancer (dates). I'll be forming a team. If you'd like to join, either by walking, running, or making a donation, please contact me (at extension number or email address). Together, we really can make a difference in the fight against cancer.

### ***Email***

Subject: Would you like to make a difference?

I'd like to tell you about something really exciting coming to our community on (dates) – a Relay For Life. It's the American Cancer Society's signature event to fight cancer. I'm forming a team, and I could sure use your help. If you'd like to be a part of this opportunity to make a difference – either by walking or making a donation – please let me know. And be sure to forward this message to your friends. The more people we can get involved, the sooner we can beat cancer. Thanks!

## **After Your Team Is Formed**

### ***Voice Mail***

Hi, this is (your name) again, and I'm proud to say that I'm the Team Captain for our American Cancer Society Relay For Life team. We're moving full-steam ahead to do our part in the fight against cancer, and we're going to have fun, too! The Relay will be held on (date), so it's not too late to join in. Please call or email me (give extension number and email address), and I'll give you all the details.

### ***Email***

Subject: There's still time to fight cancer

As Team Captain for the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life (team name) team, I'm really pleased to be in the forefront of the fight against cancer. Everyone knows someone who will be touched in some way by this disease. That's why it's so important that we raise the money necessary to make it only a memory. The cause is important, and we're going to have a great time, too! Our Relay will be held on (date), so there's still time! I hope you can join us in person, or send a contribution. Contact me and I'll give you all the details about our team, or for more about Relay For Life, visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).

## **After the Relay**

### ***Voice Mail***

Good morning! This is (your name). I'm so pleased to be able to report that our (team name) Relay For Life team raised (list \$ amount) to support the American Cancer Society's research, patient support, advocacy, and cancer control programs. Today, cancer survivorship is higher than ever. With your help, even more people will survive. Thank you one and all for your wonderful support.

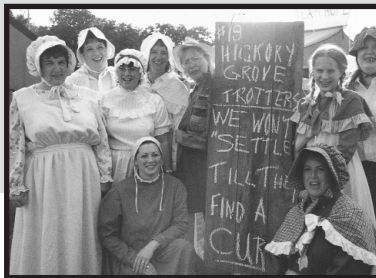
### ***Email***

Subject: Thanks for supporting the fight against cancer!

Thanks for supporting our recent American Cancer Society Relay For Life event. With your help, our team raised (list \$ amount) for the fight against cancer. Now even more people will have a chance at surviving cancer. Thanks again for your support.

# Team Theme Ideas

- Mardi Gras
- Sports
- Hawaiian
- Western  
(Cowboys & Indians)
- Beach Party
- Hollywood Movies
- Deserted Island
- Carnival/Circus
- Man/Woman
- Bowling
- Cops
- Firefighters
- Punkers
- Hockey/Sports Teams
- PJ's/Slumber Party
- Astrology
- Sports Car Theme
- Hippies
- Sci-Fi/Galaxy/Aliens
- Patriotic (*Uncle Sam - Statue of Liberty - Presidents*)
- Bistro
- Rock Groups
- Haunted House
- Jungle Theme
- Favorite Celebrity
- Game Tent – (*Board Games, Card Games - etc.*)
- Cancer Control Tent
- Princess/Royalty
- Great Outdoors/Wilderness
- Caveman/Dinosaur
- Wild Animal/Safari
- '50s - Eras
- Country Bumpkins
- Casino Party
- Winter Wonderland
- Mimes
- Jail – Ball & Chain
- Spies – Detectives
- Hula - Luau
- Cartoon Characters
- Halloween Costumes
- Christmas
- Army/Military
- Beach Theme/Nautical
- Spaceship/Astronaut
- Dog House
- Teddy Bears
- Tea Party
- Magic
- Favorite World Country
- Gypsy/Bohemian
- Leprechaun/Pot o' Gold
- Gold Medal/Olympics
- Dance Party/Dance Zone
- Carnival Theme/Games
- Car Wash/Garage Sale



# Track Schedule

Please adjust time schedule for the time of your local Relay For Life.



| TIME:            | NAME OF PERSON WALKING: |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| 6:00 - 7:00 pm   |                         |
| 7:00 - 8:00 pm   |                         |
| 8:00 - 9:00 pm   |                         |
| 9:00 - 10:00 pm  |                         |
| 10:00 - 11:00 pm |                         |
| 11:00 - Midnight |                         |
| 12:00 - 1:00 am  |                         |
| 1:00 - 2:00 am   |                         |
| 2:00 - 3:00 am   |                         |
| 3:00 - 4:00 am   |                         |
| 4:00 - 5:00 am   |                         |
| 5:00 - 6:00 am   |                         |
| 6:00 - 7:00 am   |                         |
| 7:00 - 8:00 am   |                         |
| 8:00 - 9:00 am   |                         |
| 9:00 - 10:00 am  |                         |
| 10:00 - 11:00 am |                         |
| 11:00 - Noon     |                         |
| 12:00 - 1:00 pm  |                         |
| 1:00 - 2:00 pm   |                         |
| 2:00 - 3:00 pm   |                         |
| 3:00 - 4:00 pm   |                         |
| 4:00 - 5:00 pm   |                         |
| 5:00 - 6:00 pm   |                         |







The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy, and service.

No matter who you are, we can help. Contact us anytime, day or night, for information and support.



1.800.ACS.2345  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**Hope.Progress.Answers.®**